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Research in organizational socialization is typically more concerned with settings where recruits are treated harshly than with settings where they are treated well. This paper concerns the latter, and argues that such settings allow recruits to import skills, knowledge, and values. What is imported is called a "culture of orientation." Three quasi-ethnographic illustrations spell out these ideas and suggest answers to: (1) how cultures of orientation are forged; (2) how cultures of orientation are carried within an organization; and (3) how cultures of orientation serve as problem-solving devices when new skills are learned. The amplification or muting of a culture of orientation across a career is the substance of a socialization chain.

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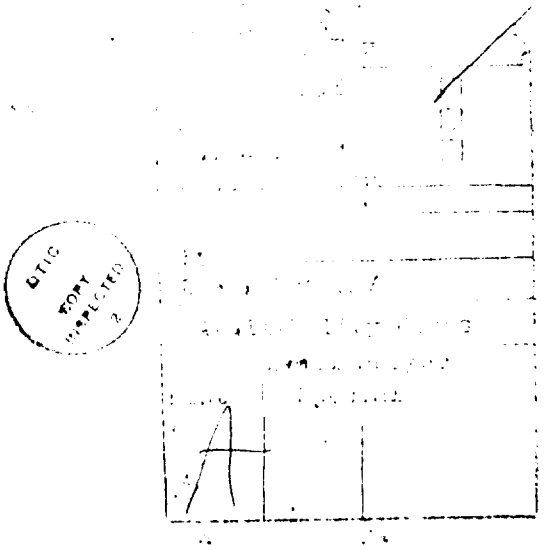

DOING NEW THINGS IN OLD WAYS

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ABSTRACT

Research in organizational socialization is typically more concerned with settings where recruits are treated harshly than with setting where they are treated well. This paper concerns the latter, and argues that such settings allow recruits to import skills, knowledge and values. What is imported is called a "culture of orientation." Three quasi-ethnographic illustrations spell out these ideas and suggest answers to: (1) How cultures of orientation are forged (e.g., MBA programs at Harvard and MIT); (2) How cultures of orientation are carried within an organization (e.g., police sergeants in American agencies); and (3) How cultures of orientation serve as problem-solving devices when new skills are learned (e.g., windsurfing as practiced by surfers, skiiers, and sailors). The amplification or muting of a culture of orientation across a career is the substance of a socialization chain.

Doing New Things in Old Ways: The Chains of Socialization[1]

John Van Maanen

M.I.T.

Organizational socialization is not a fancy phrase, it is a theory. It is a theory about how new skills, belief systems, patterns of action and, occasionally, personal identities are acquired (or not acquired) by people as they move into new social settings. It is also a theory about what kinds of things happen in these settings when some people (agents) organize tasks and social relations for other people (recruits) in particular ways. Organizational socialization, then, is about recruit responses to agent demands as tamed or accentuated by the task and social organization characterizing a given setting.

Two analytic archetypes represent contrasting forms of organizational socialization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). These archetypes draw attention to the range of possible interests socialization agents may have in the kinds of behavior they wish from newcomers. On one hand, agents may wish to remake those entering a particular social setting so that their conduct conforms to an image agents carry of what is organizationally desirable and proper. Socialization under these conditions is typically harsh, involving dismantling as well as bestowal rituals as part of a transformation process. Agent concern is directed toward the passage of traditional skills, values, practices within an organization (or department or group), and seeks, therefore, to reduce systematically whatever diversity exists among recruits at entrance (Weick, 1982). Illustrative organizations include prisons, mental hospitals, military agencies, some homes for the infirm and aged, and many educational institutions, as well as organizations marked by strong service mandates (or cla such as

professional schools, many public bureaucracies, and some more or less insulated profit-seeking organizations that are able to exert relatively high control over the markets of their interest.

On the other hand, socialization agents may wish to take advantage of whatever attitudes and skills entering members already possess and, therefore, do what is possible to encourage recruits to exhibit and further refine such attributes. Socialization under these conditions is typically celebratory and benign, involving welcoming and confirming ceremonies designed to ease whatever transition troubles recruits may experience. Agent concern is for promoting the passage of skills and practices across organizations (or departments or groups), such that recruits, viewed as vehicles carrying desirable characteristics, swiftly begin to bring their imported attributes to bear on organizational purposes. Whatever diversity is found among the recruits at entrance is, presumably, of little agent concern. Organizational examples include most circles of higher-level management, most voluntary and leisure oriented organizations such as civic associations and sporting clubs, most educational programs built on preserving the heterogeneity of the student body, and, probably, most profit seeking firms that have relatively little control over the markets in which they operate.[2]

The distinction drawn between these two forms of organizational socialization is of importance in this essay. One form transfers skills, knowledge, and values learned elsewhere by recruits into a new setting without great modification, thus deemphasizing agent-directed, organization-specific learning. The other form transforms skills, knowledge, and values brought to the setting by recruits, thus promoting agent-directed, organization-specific learning. Much of what is currently thought a result of organizational socialization is of the latter variety. Specific skills, knowledge, and values

that transcend particular socialization settings are not often discussed in the organizational socialization literature since more than one setting is rarely examined in any given study. Moreover, those ascribed attributes that are transmitted or do transcend settings are usually regarded as results of early childhood (e.g., personality development, language learning, moral development, etc.) or institutional socialization processes (e.g., educational, class, media, etc.) and are, as such, thought so basic, so fundamental, that they do not warrant more than passing mention.[3]

Yet, as I have argued elsewhere, socialization takes place from womb to tomb. It is a recurrent and lifelong process taking many forms and occurring across a wide range of settings (Van Maanen, 1976, forthcoming). Exiting one setting moves one into another, a socialization begins anew. For example, work careers as well as educational careers are marked by observable and more or less ordered role and status shifts, each entailing different mixes of responsibility, skill, colleagues, and required behavior (Becker & Strauss, 1964; Schein, 1971). It is in this sense, then, that we can speak of careers as "chains of socialization." And by so speaking we can begin to note, as those involved in such chains do, the similarities and dissimilarities among the links.

My purpose here is to suggest what might be learned by examining the links of a socialization chain rather than by examining any one socialization episode in isolation. The advice to be offered students of organizational socialization will be to look back across several socialization settings for insight into the way individuals currently respond to new task and social demands. Specifically, I will propose and defend the relatively straightforward proposition that people, when left to their own devices, learn new skills (or roles, or occupations, etc.) in much the same ways they learned old skills which are seen as similar to the new.[4] This is not a particularly keen or novel suggestion, but, as I intend to

show, it is a suggestion that opens up some intriguing empirical and theoretical avenues in the sociology of organization and work behavior.

Conceptual Framework

A good deal of research goes into exploring the social psychological correlates of socialization processes in various kinds of educational organizations (e.g., Newcomb and Wilson, 1966; Cusik, 1973; Rosenbaum, 1976; Bess, 1978). Medical schools, in particular, are often examined intensively in terms of the ideological, attitudinal, and behavioral changes undergone by student physicians as they pass through the various stages of student life (e.g., Merton et al., 1957; Becker et al., 1961; Bosk, 1979). Much the same is true for studies of recruit socialization in work organizations (e.g., Mortimer and Simmons, 1978; Frese, 1982; Nicholson, 1982). Relatively less effort in either work or educational domains is directed toward exploring the social structure of socialization settings and the differential impact such structure may have on recruits ostensibly undergoing preparation for similar roles (e.g., Wheeler, 1966; Bucher et al., 1970; Ondrac, 1975; Light, 1979). Most critically, very little work examines the structural or cognitive analogies (if any) between two socialization experiences sequentially undergone by the same individual or group.[5]

It is this last matter I wish to push about in this paper. A good place to start pushing is with the notion of "anticipatory socialization;" a phrase coined by Merton (1957: 265) to refer to the process by which people begin to take on the perspectives of the groups to which they aspire. It is cultural learning that Merton has in mind, and it covers such matters as expectations, values, skill development, and normative (moral) judgments about the kinds of abilities and performances a person thinks likely to be applicable and rewarded in an

imagined new setting. Anticipatory socialization stems from any and all learning experiences a person has prior to entering an aspired-to situation, although, other things being equal (surely the exception in social life), more recent experiences will probably outweigh the more distant (Van Maanen, 1976).

Viewed in this fashion, anticipatory socialization can be keyed to both particular periods and specific settings in a person's life. Socialization chains are then comprised of links wherein the lessons learned in any one period and setting are put on the line by a recruit and subjected to some sort of test in another period and setting. A socialization chain, has, of course, many links. Hence, when looking back over a chain, people will typically regard some socialization experiences as more crucial, more fateful, more important, and more useful to them currently (or generally) than other experiences which, for the moment at least, are thought of as inappropriate, irrelevant, or misguided, if they are thought of at all. Those exalted socialization episodes represent times and places which have proven their worth to people in terms of the skills and values they now happily and conveniently believe they possess.

The specific context where, for a recruit, this sort of highly regarded socialization occurs is what I will call a "culture of orientation." This is, in essence, what recruits import into any new setting. Such a culture may, of course, not import easily. It may, in fact, prove disastrous to recruits since it may be attacked in the new setting by socialization agents who have an interest in defiling and destroying the prior understandings some, if not all, recruits bring with them. However, when the culture of orientation is honored or at least tolerated by agents, then we can reasonably begin to consider how new things are learned in old ways.

Because I have now introduced the term, a word or two on the definition and use of the omnibus noun, culture, is due. By and large, proof of a culture's

existence lies in the simple observation that some people manage to do a number of things together (Redfield, 1941; Becker and Geer, 1960). This is usually not accidental. For people to act in coordinated ways, each must first have some ideas about how to do something and what it means to do it. Each must also must believe that at least a few other people share this idea as well. To lift some well chosen words of Howard Becker (1982:518): "[culture] . . . consists of people doing something in line with their understandings of what one might do under the given circumstances. Others, recognizing what was done as appropriate, will then consult their notions of what might be done and do something that seems right to them, to which others in return will respond similarly, and so on." This is a spare definition of culture. But, it is all we need here because it properly points to the shared understandings people use to align the r actions with others. When a group of people do, in fact, share certain relevant understandings (as expressed through the language they use, deeds they perform, artifacts they employ, stories they tell, accomplishments they honor, standards they heed, gestures they acknowledge, etc.), culture can serve as an explanation for at least some individual and collective behavior.[6]

Chains of Socialization

I take as axiomatic that people carry culture with them. Leaving one setting for another does not mean that the cultural premises of the first are abandoned for those of the second. Whatever cultures of orientation recruits possess will help shape their understandings and responses to the task demands and performance requirements made of them in any new setting. Colloquially, a culture of orientation provides "roots" for a recruit in transition and tells others in the new setting where the recruit is "coming from." If the socialization machinery encountered by a recruit is of the ceremonial,

confirmatory sort, the culture of orientation offers the person in transition knowledge, technique, and value, all of which are helpful in making the transition a smooth one by providing a strong link in the socialization chain. How such connections from past to present experience are made by recruits is the subject of the following three quite brief, yet distinct ethnographic accounts.

For analytic diversity, descriptive drama, and personal fancy, I examine the socialization processes involved in acquiring an occupation (management), taking a role (police sergeant), and learning a skill (windsurfing). In each example the focus is on contrasting aspects of a given link in a socialization chain. The occupational illustration considers some of the ways certain graduate business schools prepare their students for managerial careers, and concentrates, therefore, on how particular cultures of orientation are learned and adopted by recruits (students). Although it is the most elaborate of my examples, the playing out of the respective cultures of orientation in the multiple work worlds entered by graduates of the examined prepatory programs is only tentatively (and swiftly) addressed. The role socialization example (police sergeants) considers intraorganizational mobility and, in contrast to the management school materials, concentrates more on the carry-over of a culture of orientation into a new social context than on its creation. The final example deals with skill acquisition (windsurfing) and, although it is the most compact and abbreviated of my illustrations, it considers more directly than either of the previous two examples the way a link in a socialization chain is forged by recruits, both socially and cognitively.

Golden Passports: Management Education at Harvard and MIT[7]

A common observation is that graduates of some educational institutions never seem to get over the experience of their attendance. It is said, for

example, "once a Yalie, always a Yalie." Certainly some schools, notably the most prestigious, expensive, and exclusive ones, are far more successful than others in producing graduates who have paradigmatic but institutionally unique ways of presenting themselves to others, solving worldly problems, and, apparently, displaying their trained capacities (or incapacities) in much of what they do. That some sixty year old alumni still shed an occasional tear (or dollar) for Dear Old Alma Mater attests to the power certain institutions possess in shaping the lasting identities and perspectives of their students. Professional schools leave their mark on graduates as well.

This section examines the formation of what, for many students, comes to represent a most significant and enduring culture of orientation. Moreover, it is a culture that is sought, bought, and put to immediate use in many of the most highly regarded business enterprises of this society. My focus is on two elite schools that graduate yearly cadres of MBA's, eager and presumably well prepared to enter the primal soup of corporate life. The examples of choice are rather near and dear to my heart: MIT's Sloan School of Management (where I currently teach) and, upriver, Harvard's world renowned business school (more commonly, the B-School). Whatever favoritism leaks out of my descriptions can perhaps be countered by the reader's own.

The two business schools discussed here are presented publicly by the agents within them as quality institutions which transform high-potential but essentially raw recruits into astute observers of the business scene who are more or less bursting with managerial talent. Both settings are intentionally designed to change people, to make them smarter, wiser, skilled, knowledgeable, and the like. Of course, more is accomplished than the simple transmission of knowledge and technique. This "more" often includes the transmission of values or ideologies, preferences for certain activities and

distastes for other activities, standards of evaluation, the making of new friends and associates, the refinement of social skills, and so forth. More to the point, what is learned in graduate schools of business, including and beyond the stuff of the classroom, has something to do with the way various learning tasks are organized for students by the faculty and administration.[8]

Graduate students seeking the Harvard MBA do so in splendid isolation from both the undergraduate and other graduate schools of the university. The business school campus is across the river from the main campus and is literally a self-contained educational plant with its own bookstore, press, libraries, pub, health center, administrative offices, recreational facilities (tennis, squash and handball courts, pool, running track, etc.), barber shop, post office, and semi-attractive living quarters to house the majority of the student body. The school also operates on its own quite distinctive class schedule (incomprehensible to outsiders) and academic calendar which neither begins nor ends a term in harmony with other schools at Harvard (or elsewhere). It is altogether possible, if not probable, that a student in the business school will complete a two-year course of instruction without meeting another Harvard student outside those already enrolled in the B-School.

The education of students at Harvard is organized by section. Each entrant is assigned membership in one relatively large section consisting of 70 or so students. Akin to jolly coppers on parade, during the first year all students in the eleven or so marching units must take, in lockstep, the same classes, in the same order, at the same time, with the same 70 fellow marchers. Identical academic tasks face all members of a given section so that whatever educational problems a student encounters are problems at least nominally shared by every other member of that section. As a result of what is seen as both good sense and gentle but persistent faculty urging, the vast majority of students at the

B-School form within-section study groups as a way of handling what is almost universally regarded as a very heavy work load. So heavy is the perceived work load that legend has it more than a few Harvard students all but officially cut off pre-business school ties with friends, lovers, and kin outside their cohort until they discover that whatever personal worries they have about "hitting the screen" (i.e., flunking out) are unfounded or, more seldom perhaps, until all the dreaded first-year hurdles are cleared. Relief comes in the second year when only one course is required and the remainder of a student's course load is filled by electives. Yet, even in the second year, section ties often persist and many students continue to take the same classes, in the same order, with many of the same first-year section colleagues.

The operational or classroom format of B-School education also has its distinctive features.[9] In most classes, students sit behind nameplates in spacious, multitiered, horseshoe ampitheaters functionally arranged so that every student is allowed an unobstructed view of most every other student in the section as well as the instructor in charge of the class who works the students from the "pit."[10] From the pit, there is a conscious effort made by many faculty to mention each student's name nearly every time they participate in class. Participation is itself a prominent evaluation criteria used by the faculty in grading students. For ease of scheduling, several section classes are often held back-to-back within the same classroom during a term, thus promoting a degree of student ownership and comfort in the room while "visiting" faculty rotate through.

Given such intensive exposure to one another, it is little wonder that students come to appreciate and know very well, indeed, virtually all their section-mates. They not only observe one another continually during the school day, but they study, party, and more or less live together after the school day

ends. From the classroom to ski trips, harbor cruises, sun bathing at Baker Beach, end-of-term bash, or the ever-present intramural sport programs, student life is remarkably partitioned at the B-School. Although tight friendship networks are hardly section wide, sections do come to possess something of a collective identity (e.g., the friendliest, the jocks, the brightest, the most social, the hardest working, or, more common perhaps, the best). Students can, and usually do, support these images in everyday conversation by contrasting the characteristics of their own sterling section to others in the school who are, more often than not, found wanting for various and sundry reasons.

Downriver, MIT's Sloan School, while considerably smaller in size, organizes its educational mission in far different ways. There is no sectioning of entering students at MIT, although the 150 or so student class size might allow for a few sections of the Harvard variety. Beyond the modest (some say tacky) snack-bar and student lounging areas, there are no special business school facilities or dormitories. The buildings which house the Sloan School also house MIT's economics and political science departments. Few courses are restricted solely to Sloan School students. In fact, about 25 percent of the enrollment in most courses taken by Sloan master's students consists of non-Sloan students.

One rarely sees nameplates in MIT classrooms, and classroom participation is either an insignificant or nonexistent portion of a student's grade in all but a few classes. As might be expected, attendance norms at Sloan are far more variable than at Harvard where one's absence is sure to be detected quickly by one's section mates, if not the faculty. Throughout the school day, MIT students continually shuffle between classrooms and, until this fall, they shuffled (some ran) between classrooms located in campus buildings as far apart as a half mile. Class size varies considerably by course, as do assignments any one student will have due the following day (or week, or end-of-term) compared to any other

student in the school. Students, therefore, are free to spend as much or as little time on a particular task (or class) as they think that task (or class) warrants, since for any given assignment there are few acknowledged norms to surround and define the "proper" amount of effort to be put forth. There are also differences in the time students are required to spend in class. Although the number of classes required for graduation are roughly the same, Harvard students are expected to spend about one-third more hours in class than those at MIT.

As is the case at Harvard, almost all entering students at MIT graduate on schedule. But, at MIT, the routes taken to graduation show greater variance than at Harvard in terms of the classes students take (both in number and variety) and the order in which they are taken. The open-ended nature of MIT's program guarantees that students must individually organize and selectively attend to the work tasks set before them by the faculty in the classroom and by the school in terms of its program requirements. As if to punctuate these differences, MIT requires from each student a Master's Thesis and a declared area of concentration. Harvard does not.[11] The task structure at MIT results in a rather personalized educational experience and, among the students, there is relatively little recognition of common problems and virtually no recognition of what might be common solutions (i.e., enduring study groups) to whatever dilemmas the master's program entails for those who pass through.

On the basis of these sketches of organizational or structural dissimilarities, some tentative cultural descriptions can be offered. The point to be kept in mind of course, is that the shared understandings which differentiate Harvard and MIT students represent cultures of orientation students carry to the various businesses they enter upon matriculation. Although both institutions are preparing students for managerial careers, the cultures of

orientation they pack for their graduates to take with them are noticeably distinct. Consider Harvard first.

There appears to be a uniformity of impact regarding life at the B-School. Students seem to love and hate various aspects of the curriculum, but to do so together. There is also something of a "collective paranoia" or "siege-mentality" that characterizes the early experiences of students in the school. Because many students are at least initially convinced that the faculty is highly organized and "out-to-get-them" (alternatively, "out-to-change-them") a sort of us-versus-them spirit results (no doubt nudged along by the heavy work load students believe they endure). Such spirit strengthens section ties since section members are all more or less in the same boat. Collective solutions to common problems are the result, and information sharing norms are highlighted even when such norms are discouraged openly by faculty members with ceremonial exhortations to "do your own work." While apparently rare, such invocations of naked individualism are duly noted by many students, and then promptly disregarded.[12]

Within Harvard sections, impression management skills are highly valued, wherein the human relations necessary for cooperative effort -- even among those (or especially among those) who detest one another -- must be sustained over the long graduate school haul. Particular problems are many, but considerable effort apparently goes into "pegging production" by controlling both the rate-busters who could make other section members look bad, as well as rate-shirkers who might draw unwanted faculty attention to the entire section. By applauding, booing, or even hissing, it is relatively easy (however crude) for a well organized section to check the classroom antics of potentially deviant members. Moreover, according to students, study group norms develop in a like manner to help members control those ever-ready workaholics who would keep the study group grinding away

around the clock, those after-class commandos who would suck up to a professor at the expense of those not so sucking, or those equally deviant gleaners or leeches in the study group who would absorb group efforts without reciprocation or contribution.

At any rate, it appears that, for most students, life at the B-School is rarely lonely. Most students usually know what nearly everyone else in their section is up to at any given time. The social context surrounding activities, both in and outside the classroom, promotes high visibility among students through what Thorstein Veblen (1899) might regard as "invidious displays." The competition at Harvard may be peaceable on the surface and savage underneath, but it is a form of competition kept in check by the simple fact that students are convinced that if each is to do well in the program, they need one another (e.g., "thou shalt not cut down one another in class"). Indeed, student groups themselves are typically formed not on the principles of characteristic similarity or shared interests (though these may quickly develop or be discovered) but on principles of mutual disinterest, such that most study groups represent a planned and clever mixture of individual skills, each applicable to different domains of the curriculum. In this sense, the organization of the B-School produces (and reproduces, year after year) a fairly dense, encompassing, collegial culture wherein the student collective exercises considerable influence over its members and, some would say, over the faculty as well.[13]

Sloan School students experience and report very different influences. If togetherness and normative consensus mark Harvard, relative isolation and normative dissensus characterizes the occupational socialization at MIT. Competition, while certainly present, tends to be inward or self-directed. Guilt, as compared to shame, is a controlling sentiment at MIT, serving to animate and usually motivate individual students. In contrast to Harvard,

students at Sloan have relatively few opportunities to perform in front of their classmates. Moreover, students can only compare performances within particular classes and must invent standards for comparison across classes since the self-selected instructional programs of fellow students vary. What can be compared, however, is largely written work or grade. Both, of course, are of the sort that if students wish to keep their performances private, they can easily do so.[14]

Friendships appear to be almost accidental at Sloan, based more upon common interests outside the classroom than problems or interests shared within the program. In general, students seem relatively more obsequious to the authority of the faculty at MIT than at Harvard. The Sloan faculty, it seems, has been able to successfully, however unintentionally, divide and more or less conquer the student body. The numerical strength and sentimental ties necessary to effectively challenge school policy or practice is seldom present among the students at MIT. Of some importance, too, is that at MIT most classes are taught on a one-faculty, one-class basis so that the grounds students might otherwise possess to compare faculty and their educational products -- presumably of some concern to students -- are, at best, foggy. Compared to Harvard, students at MIT are seldom bothered at the same time by any particular aspect of their graduate programs and, even if they were, there would be no organization in place (other than that explicitly condoned by the school) through which insurgency might be effected. If nothing else, by sectioning students Harvard also empowers them.[15]

Impression management skills, while obviously of value when carving out instrumental and expressive links with other students on campus, are of relatively less importance at MIT than Harvard. Because various school-based or classroom groupings at Sloan are temporary, shifting, and subject specific, getting along with one's classmates is situationally defined, sometimes

important, sometimes not. This is not to say that students as a whole neglect their immediate human condition, or that they are in any way socially flawed or interpersonally incompetent. But it is the case that individual arrogance, abrasiveness, slyness, rudeness, withdrawal, and sophomoric forms of personal display are relatively easy to tolerate when attachments are known to be fleeting and limited to only one class (and then only for whatever time remains in a term). By and large, MIT students would never think of booing or hissing the public foibles of a classmate. They may be disgusted by what is going on, as is the case when one eager-beaver dominates a classroom discussion, but they would rarely, if ever, act collectively to bring it to a halt.

What is valued at MIT is individual performance in those courses thought by the students to be tough and demanding. Performance champions in these courses emerge with reputations and ascribed characteristics that are respected but not necessarily envied by the cohort group. The overall adjustment of students is one that heightens the individualistic and differentiated responses of the student body. Collective solutions to common problems are few and far between, and the students who learn best are apparently those who do so on their own. Although individual students may try to "psych-out" particular faculty members and then give them back on assignments what they think they want, such information would typically be kept quiet and not passed on down the student line. Successful "psyching" will not break student ranks at MIT because there are no ranks to break.

All of this is, of course, overdrawn. There are commonalities in both settings (based largely on how students think the ideal, "never indecisive," modern manager should behave). More crucially, however, individuals vary in both settings, as do personal responses. But, insulated by heavy schedules and suffering from common woes not easily grasped by those not currently sharing the

same problems, students moving into either Harvard or MIT adapt to their respective tasks and organizations in ways that go well beyond personal explanations. There are different cultures here, and these cultures are the result not so much of idiosyncratic choice, curriculum, or the entering goals and talents of each class, but of the systematic organization of the student's life and education. In this light, it is hardly farfetched to suggest that the skills and, perhaps more importantly, the values graduates take with them as representatives of the Harvard or MIT culture of orientation, as well as the sorts of jobs and careers that prove attractive to them, are quite likely to be, on average, quite different.

Independent of coursework, personal background, areas of concentration, or those well-honed technical skills developed in both schools, MIT and Harvard graduates will seldom bring similar interests, abilities, and learning preferences to the corporate worlds they join. On average, Harvard graduates are more likely to find large, Fortune 500 companies attractive, especially those which emphasize managerial teamwork as the key to career advancement. MIT graduates are responsive to rewards claimed to be linked to individual performance. Teamwork and group-based management practices hold relatively little fascination for Sloan graduates for whom such phrases have, at best, ambiguous meanings. Staff positions, technical consultant roles, small firms, risk-seeking, high-potential-growth companies are those likely to attract higher percentages of MIT than Harvard graduates.

Placement statistics bear out these differences. For example, in 1982, small firms gathered up 40 percent of MIT's graduates, compared to 11 percent of Harvard's graduates. For large firms the figures are reversed, with 67 percent of Harvard's class choosing to work for big organizations, compared to 48 percent of MIT's class. In terms of functional breakdowns, the picture is less clear,

but still in the expected direction since more Harvard graduates report taking general or project management positions than MIT graduates (47 to 34 percent, respectively).[16] Moreover, recruiters (arguably the most knowledgeable observers of MBA's) sharply contrast the graduates of the two programs. Kahn (1982) presents impressive evidence giving Harvard students a wide edge over Sloan students in the eyes of recruiters in terms of their perceived interpersonal skills, aggressiveness, and candidacy for general management (the edge is reversed when analytic competence and managerial techniques are considered). Harvard graduates are also thought by recruiters to learn more from their classmates and fit more easily into work organizations than their Sloan counterparts.

It appears, then, that the academic culture nurtured, if not farmed at MIT, favors the growth of managerial specialists, interested, at least at the outset of their respective corporate careers, in planting their own rather fully developed technical skills within managerial fields. In contrast, Harvard graduates come to appreciate not only their fellow graduates (as do MIT alumni), but also what is seen by them as the roundedness and generality of their managerial education. Certainly, after listening to so many section and study group discussions in which members offer up their own certain, well thought out, and sometimes carefully rehearsed views on the problem at hand, it is no surprise that Harvard graduates are convinced that the so-called Big Picture cannot be grasped by any one mind, no matter how enormous, inventive, or quick that mind might be. If the section or study group helps one prosper in school, management teams and an inquisitive, pragmatic, cooperative spirit should help one prosper at work. That neither orientation derives from only the coursework or educational materials to which students are exposed is the central point of this discussion. Both orientations, I would argue, stem largely from the social

context manufactured and supported by each institution's very distinct culture-building and culture-maintaining organization of student life.

Making Rank: Station-House and Street Sergeants[17]

Consider now an example of role and status passage. In particular, consider how the cultures of orientation carried by recruits to a new organizational role shape the way they carry out and define their new tasks. Emphasis in this section is placed not only on the diversity of understandings surrounding a given role contained within one organization, but also on tracking down the sources of this diversity. The specific role examined is that of police sergeant.

Big city police agencies in the United States recruit lower and mid-level supervisory personnel from within the organization. Police sergeants are the most numerous of low level managers in these organizations. They are assigned most frequently to the largest division of police agencies, the patrol division. Within the patrol division, sergeants are responsible for the work of territorially-based squads comprised of five to 25 police officers who rove about "their" beats in one-man or two-man cars. Much of what squad members do on patrol they do out of sight of their sergeant, and do so not at his command, but at the request of radio dispatchers.

Despite this apparent loose-coupling (or, perhaps, because of it), there is, nonetheless, considerable reciprocity standing between the actions a sergeant may or may not take in regard to the actions his charges may or may not take. He is dependent on his officers to answer dispatched calls promptly and with a degree of courtesy, to meet departmentally established and personally set quotas (arrests, tickets, field investigation reports, etc.) and to accomplish such work smoothly without causing untoward concern for the squad and its members

(including the sergeant) among the public or others in the department. Patrol officers are dependent on their sergeant for small favors that are his to hand out (time off, easy duty, overtime assignments, etc.) and for protection from the consequences of the mistakes they will, in good faith and bad, make.

The selection of sergeants is a one-at-a-time, examination-based process. It is governed in part by local Civil Service Boards, and in part by higher officials in the police agency who combine, in sometimes inventive ways, various performance measures (test scores, interview rankings, educational records, military service points, seniority lists, etc.) to produce an ordered list of candidates every two or three years. From the top of this list, sergeants are selected as needed by the Chief of Police, in consultation with trusted or, sometimes, merely obligatory advisors. Discretion is allowed, but there are normative constraints about dipping too far down the list of eligibles for selections. Few agencies provide any training whatsoever for newly-selected or would-be sergeants. First assignments vary, of course, but most sergeants can expect initially to be given the least desirable shifts, the least desirable squads, in the least desirable locations of the patrol division.

On the basis of these structural characteristics, the sociologically inclined might suppose that new sergeants will approach their roles in divergent, creative, situationally-responsive and particularistic ways (Van Maanen and Schein, 1979). This corresponds to the belief systems of police officers on these matters as well. Patrol officers, in particular, talk about and personify their sergeants in highly individualistic terms, taking care to point out to an interested listener the wide variety of sergeant proclivities:

> "Now you take Sergeant Johnson. He was a drunk hunter. That guy wanted all the drunks off the street and you knew that if you brought in a couple of drunks a week, you and he would get along just fine. Sergeant Moss, now, is a

> different cat. He don't give a rat's ass about drunks. What he wants are those vice pinches. Sergeant Gorden wanted tickets, and he'd hound your ass for a ticket a night. So you see, it all depends on who you're working for. Each guy's a little different."

Such views, however, have their limitations. Claims of idiosyncracies run on the surface, representing something of a collective rationale patrol officers whistle to one another as they go about various tasks they consider to be mere peculiarities of a given sergeant. But, there is also another tune they whistle, and this tune corresponds to a recognized, deeper structure associated with the performance styles and standards of sergeants. It is this latter structure that reflects the culture of orientation idea, for it is a structure related intimately to where in the department a given patrol sergeant has come.

There are two basic paths followed by police officers who wear the three stripes of a sergeant. One path is interdivisional and experientially diverse, involving an officer in various functional areas of the department. The other path is intra-divisional and experientially singular, involving an officer in assignments limited to the patrol division. The former path brings officers into everyday contact with matters of administrative concern in the department. Paperwork, planning, record keeping, public relations, investigatory procedures, fine points of the law, statistics, data banks and files, clerical responsibilities, inter-organizational relations, case loads, report generating, program development, grant getting, project monitoring, and so forth are all examples of matters of some importance to many police officers who, without benefit of promotion, have, nevertheless, moved outside of the patrol division and become embedded in the administrative or managerial culture of police organizations. The latter path is marked solely by membership in the street or field culture of policing, a culture distinguished by its disdain for

administrative concerns and its emphasis on action, crook-catching, independence, street smarts, and intense peer relations centered on the importance of supporting one's mates, both physically vis-a-vis the villains of the street and socially vis-a-vis the brass of the department. While all new sergeants have at least modest exposure to and involvement with the street culture of policing, not all new sergeants have exposure to and involvement with the administrative culture. And, herein lies at least a partial explanation for the diversity of role performances among sergeants.

Some sergeants (the majority, in fact) are regarded by patrol officers as "station-house" (or "precinct") sergeants. When on duty these supervisors are seemingly always at or near their desks, hence the generic tag, station-house sergeant. Nicknames are revealing here. Station-house sergeants are known to patrol officers by such titles as "Hats-On Harry," "By-The-Book Brubaker," "Off-At-Seven George," "Fixed-Post Porter," and, my favorite, "Edwards, The Olympic Torch Who Never Goes Out." What these sometimes endearing, sometimes cutting, monickers suggest is a work style well understood by those subject to its whims. Because they are firmly fixed to their administrative work stations, these sergeants become obvious to patrol officers by their avoidance of specific entanglements outside the "office" in the often messy world of hands-on policing. In line with such avoidance, station-house sergeants define their roles in terms of standing behind the men assigned to them and being responsible for their conduct on the beat. This is a managerially-approved definition, and station-house sergeants are quick to point out how difficult it is for them to motivate their men to fulfill their quotas, properly fill out their reports, stay in line with departmental rules and regulations, and answer their calls within tolerable time limits. It is a fairly formal, relatively distant, supervisory

style that is enacted by station-house sergeants and it is a style best seen in contrast to their counterparts, "street sergeants."

If station-house sergeants are believed to stand behind their men, street sergeants are believed to stand alongside of them. It is a collegial role that is enacted, and it is enacted not behind a desk or in departmental offices but on the streets where calls are taken, arrests produced, coffee inhaled, and the mundane to dramatic rituals of policing acted out. Street sergeants also have their share of revealing titles: "I'll-Take-It Sam," Billyjack," "Shooter McGee," "Radio-Free LeBaron," "Peeping Tom," and "Walker The Stalker." These handles reflect the behavioral predilections of street sergeants such as their presumed preference for live (in police parlance, "on-view") action, their tendency to override or otherwise horn-in on calls originally assigned to a particular patrol unit, their distaste for official departmental procedures, and so on. Street sergeants define their mission not in terms of their responsibility for the men of their command, but in terms of their responsibility for the beat or territory they command. When asked about the objectives of their jobs, they are likely to respond in ways quite similar to those whom they supervise -- "keeping a clean patch," "getting the bad guys," "holding the line," or, more generally, "not letting the assholes take over the city."

Of most concern here are the cultures of ientation which account for these contrasting approaches. Street sergeants typically come to their new roles directly from the street culture of police organizations where most police administrators are far more remarkable for their absence than for their presence in the field. Moreover, when assuming the new role, many parts of the old role remain both present and relevant. A car and dispatch code are still assigned to a sergeant, personally assigned turf is again provided (albeit, a larger one, encompassing several beats), the same uniform is still worn even if there are

extra stripes on the sleeve, and, from the street cop's perspective, the assholes are still out there roaming about, uncaught and untaught. It is hardly surprising that without much exposure to differing kinds of police roles and the "hands-off" celebratory character that marks the transition, the new sergeant role is adopted in a fashion so similar to the way the old patrol officer role is played.

Station-house sergeants, however, typically move into their roles from a position existing within the administrative culture of police organizations. They have typically been out of uniform and the patrol division ("out of the bag") for some time and have become more or less accustomed to and, critically, come to value the managerial or bureaucratic dimensions of police agencies (e.g., budgets, plans, reports, standard operating procedures, targets, etc.). They have worked more closely with those occupying the higher ranks of the agency than is possible for those in patrol and, in general, have begun to appreciate the logic embedded within the administrative tasks they have been assigned (i.e., rationality, efficiency, predictability, accountability, discipline, etc.). It appears also that those officers outside the patrol division who claim serious aspirations to the sergeant's role (in police talk, "wannabees") have also begun to develop a rather deep suspicion of their all-too-canny former colleagues in the patrol division who are "out there" on the street, out of view and, perhaps, out of control as well.

It is not the case, however, that patrol officers necessarily prefer one kind of sergeant to the other. Both role orientations have their faults. Street sergeants, for example, are often seen to poach, to undersupervise while generally making nuisances of themselves by denying some of the vaunted autonomy patrol officers believe is their due in the field. At the same time, station-house sergeants are thought to be preoccupied by the rule book and, thus,

unappreciative of the situational particulars which, to patrol officers, render rules and regulations irrelevant, inappropriate, and sometimes downright dangerous when used as guides to practical action. Patrol officers may take exception to both on-view judgements of street sergeants, and the retrospective counts of activity made by station-house sergeants.

On the other hand, street sergeants are thought to know the score; to know what is 'coming down" on particular beats and, hence, be far less persnickety about the legal niceties surrounding police work. Station-house sergeants have their good points too. They can almost always be located when questions arise and reports need adjustments or signatures; they typically have more intradepartmental clout, useful when a patrol officer would like a change of shift, precinct, or partner; and they tend, on average, to have more small favors than street sergeants to dispense to those officers they believe more deserving than others. For those on patrol, station-house sergeants are, therefore, somewhat easier to work for because their behavior is more predictable -- although the grounds for such predictability may strike many officers as patently ridiculous (e.g., writing misdemeanor drinking-in-public tickets as a way of staying on good terms with a given sergeant). However, no matter what a particular and always peculiar patrol officer's feelings about a given sergeant, all would agree, whatever a station-house sergeant is, a street sergeant is not.[18]

Obviously, the whole story is not woven by using only these two yarns. Individual personalities are involved, extra-curricular interests play a part, family and educational backgrounds matter, and, for some sergeants, the paths taken into the role are circuitous, moving in and out of the patrol division, and not nearly so pat as my examples suggest. Nonetheless, it is true that the administrative and street cultures of police organizations are recognized by

sergeants and their men alike. Not only are they recognized, but sergeants typically perform their roles in ways consistent with one culture and, hence, opposed to the other.

The central point of this quick insider's look at the work of police sergeants and the process of becoming one is to again demark the relevance of the culture of orientation possessed by recruits as a way of understanding how some new roles, in this case organizational and occupational ones, come to be defined and carried out. The upshot is the necessity to look backward from the assumption of the new role to the lessons learned by a recruit in the old role. To understand how a sergeant is made is to understand the orientation a man brings to the new bundle of tasks he must perform as a sergeant -- a bundle which, of course, for many, turns out not to look so very new at all. In most police agencies at least, virtually no efforts are made to correct for whatever supervisory task, value, and performance perspectives the previous role may have engendered. I suspect this situation prevails in far more organizations than just those of the police.

Getting Up: Learning to Windsurf[19]

My final example draws on some felicitous observations of an increasingly popular leisure pursuit called "windsurfing" (a relaxation sometimes pursued with a vengeance that rivals middle-of-the-pack marathoners, video game fanatics, and rock climbers possessed of terminal glee). I include these materials here because they elegantly display -- in an almost visual fashion -- virtually all the theoretical devices I've employed in the discussion thus far. Unlike managerial education or police supervision, the basic skills of windsurfing are relatively simple, thus quickly learned, always in a recruit's line of sight and, perhaps more critically, represent skills about which there can be little debate

as to whether or not one has them. Yet even in this restricted context several cultures of orientation are found. Each culture provides recruits with identifiable, yet contrasting, ways of learning to windsurf, as well as distinctive patterns regarding what is held dear by windsurfers once the skill is mastered.

Windsurfing (alternatively, freesailing, boardsailing, sailsurfing, windsailing, sailriding, sailboarding, surfsailing, freeboarding, ad nauseum) is a comparatively new sport. It combines elements of the traditional sailboat (although there is no rudder and no place to sit down) with those of the surfboard (although it is piloted by shifting one's weight and manipulating the elliptic boom that runs all the way around the sail set in the middle of the board). Novice windsurfers come to the sport from a wide variety of previous endeavors. Some have surfed, some have skied, some have sailed, some have done none of these, some have done all (Miller and Hutchins 1982). For simplicity's sake, however, I will examine only three cultures of orientation, and will do so as if the memberships of each were mutually exclusive. This is a fiction of course, but not a serious one. Of more importance here than previous attachments per se, or the potential overlap among them, is the convincing demonstration that the culture of orientation notion is a worthy one. To accomplish this it seems reasonable, first, to show just what novice windsurfers bring to windsurfing on the basis of their past involvements and then, second, to display that whatever this is, it makes a difference. Consider first, the surfer.

Surf culture is identified with an anarchistic, free-spirited, do-your-own-thing, leisure ethic (Irwin, 1977:84-88). Its mass participation contexts are found on sunny Southern California beaches where the rhetorics of freedom-seeking, spontaneity, physical vigor, and outdoor pleasures are heard against a background marked by smog, urban sprawl, fear, ethnic heterogeneity and

restricted space (Irwin, 1973). Surfers and dedicated beachgoers alike know how to be, in Edgarton's (1979) marvelous phrase, "alone together." Moreover, surfing is highly individualistic in the sense that personally customized boards and surfing styles are praiseworthy, that valued myths convey an imagery of the uncomplicated but intense solo surfer forever in pursuit of the ultimate wave and ride, and that most surfers have displayed a massive resistance to formal rules, institutionalized competition, and officially recognized organizations such as surf clubs (Irwin, 1973; Pearson, 1979). Reflecting this context, but more to the point, is that the only acceptable way to learn how to surf within the surf culture is to teach oneself (or, at least, to claim so). Help from a friend is acceptable, but to take lessons, in public anyway, would be to invite ridicule because it violates certain shared (and deep) understandings about how one should go about mastering the sport.

Windsurfers who have roots in the surf culture develop their skills in an analogous fashion. The culturally acceptable learn-it-yourself surfer method is transferred to windsurfing. Cognitive similarity is advanced, for example, by the shape of the board, the popular names of the activity itself, the observation that skilled windsurfers actually do sail into and ride breaking waves, and the endorsement of windsurfing or, more commonly, windsurfing equipment by the popular human icons of surfing (Miller and Hutchins, 1982). For the most part, the result is that surfers ignore and bypass available windsurfing lessons. Nor do they study up on potential techniques beforehand by examining the various "how-to" texts available in libraries, bookstores, and magazine racks. Surfers insist on teaching themselves to windsurf and being left alone to do so at their own pace, true to their own idiosyncracies.

Consider next another approach to learning to windsurf. Those who come to windsurfing from the ski culture value teachers, instructional programs, graded

challenges, and certification of accomplishments. Skiers place faith in theories concerning the easiest, safest, and most sociable ways to acquire skills (Irwin, 1977:41-44). Ski culture promotes the belief system that expert instruction, in contrast to self-instruction, saves time and advances good habits. Like surfers, skiers anticipate that some of the skills they already possess are transferable to windsurfing. Balance, posture, twisting body movement, and the smooth shifting of weight while in swift forward progress are seen as cognitively similar to the kinds of creature motions necessary for windsurfing. Snow boarding and ice sailing are activities familiar to some skiers and, hence, may also promote cognitive ties to windsurfing.

Given such a culture of orientation, it is not surprising that skiers wishing to learn windsurfing do not reject outside help but, quite literally, insist on it. Instruction is sought and paid for without embarrassment. Moreover, skiers avoid skill level shame by typically surrounding themselves with other learners who are equally skilled (or, more likely, unskilled). Consistent with such actions is the belief that by taking graded lessons, they are learning to windsurf in the fastest, most efficient fashion. And, since the enterprise of learning to windsurf is a collective one, social ties, group activities, and the relatively common interests and styles that emerge from being in the same learning boat together have more than a little value for windsurfers from a skiing background (Miller and Hutchins, 1982).

Finally, consider how sailors approach windsurfing. If surfers are anarchistic and skiers are egalitarian, sailors, by comparison, are aristocratic, often looking down on those who do not share the mannered enthusiasm of astute cultural members or do not know their place in the sailing pecking order. From this perspective, the banzai cry of the surfer may be culturally analogous to the polite but reserved ring of the sailor's bell. But rest assured, such a cry will

not sound easy on a sailor's ear. Moreover, sailors possess arcane knowledge captured by a technical lexicon, valued water traffic safety rules, appreciation for the fine theoretical points of sail dynamics, and elaborate indicators they hold as signs for such things as weather conditions and wind speed. Sailors also believe in the usefulness of books in much the same way skiers believe in the usefulness of lessons (Miller and Hutchins, 1982). A good sized library could be stocked entirely by books related to sailing.

Consistent with this culture of orientation, sailors report reading windsurfing texts and articles when first taking up the sport (Miller and Hutchins, 1982). Moreover, the performance expert in the sailing culture is the modest but successful competitor, the taciturn sailor who wins races. Racing is the valued test of sailing skill and this is one value that is easily transferred to the windsurfing context. Whereas the individualistic surfer might be spotted in some isolated bay on a windless day in zen-like repose aboard a craft barely moving, and the skier might be found amidst a cluster of sails heading in the same direction at the same speed, the sailor might be recognized only by what appears to the observer as a grim concern for outdistancing rivals along a carefully charted course marked by the ever-present buoys.

All this is to suggest what is perhaps obvious, but not often remarked on when socialization settings and processes are examined: given a degree of similarity between an old and a new activity, the new will be approached in much the same way as the old. Lessons learned in the past (the culture of orientation) are sure to have value in the future if the recruit is conscious of a similarity between the two and no concentrated efforts are made by others to destroy or make irrelevant such cognitive ties.

COMMENT

What lessons, if any, can a reader pull from these brief snippets of cultural esoteria? I have several in mind, each dealing in some fashion with the analytic and descriptive importance of demarking the continuity or discontinuity of recruits' experiences at given links in their socialization chains. Some links require recruits to undergo transformation rites where they take on new perspectives toward the world and their role and position within it. Other links entail celebratory transitions wherein whatever cultures of orientation people carry with them into the new situation represent the main conceptual resource and skill repository to be drawn on when adjusting to the change in their life situations. Links of the latter sort represent occasions for doing new things in old ways and lead to my first tentative conclusion.

Organizational researchers have overstudied relatively harsh and intensive socialization and, as has been said before, understudied socialization of the more benign and supportive sort (Schein, 1961). A fascination with the sudden jolt, reality shock, and unforseen surprise marks much of the accumulated literature wherein recruits are shown to painfully divest themselves of much of the personal baggage brought with them into the new setting. Prisons, law schools, PhD programs, concentration camps, police academies, self-help groups, medical schools, lengthy apprenticeship programs, boot camps, sales force training programs, cult indoctrinations, high schools, academic nursing programs, counter-cultural communes, and even commercial banks in Japan where uniformed clerks come to sing each morning of strength, harmony, and profit all represent good examples in this regard.

What is missing from the educational and organizational literatures are equally detailed depictions of socialization designed (whether consciously or not) to invest in and, if anything, build on whatever attributes recruits bring

with them. In work organizations, for example, most promotional passages are ceremonial rites where warm handshakes and hearty pats on the back pay homage to the past accomplishments of the newly promoted. Recruits so welcomed are then ushered to new offices and left gracefully (perhaps gratefully as well) alone to do whatever it is they feel they must. Structurally, there is often not a peer group, a sage ancestor, or a helpful overseer of the office to be located who could offer hints as to what the newcomer might do with whatever problems come with the territory. Even in those circumstances where there are present a number of living and available guides to action, such guides often only provide aid when asked and do so in oblique ways that are difficult for a newcomer to decode.

Cognitively, the only recourse many newcomers have is to fall back on their cultures of orientation by seeking out explicit similarities (and dissimilarities) between the old and the new tasks. When we change jobs, schools, communities, and even families, we carry what we've learned before with us. To be sure, we refine and update what we've learned, but it is infrequent, even in the most disjointed of passages, that we are required to revise all our old understandings, or skills, or values at once. In this regard, words such as gradual, supportive, incremental, partial, integrative, smooth, and developmental come to mind when thinking about socialization. Indeed, the coherence of national, regional, occupational, and organizational cultures rests, at least partly, on the fact that when we are faced with puzzling situations we are usually able to remake our old understandings to meet the new circumstances so that conscious innovations are only a small variation on what came before (Becker, 1982:587). When examining individual socialization chains, researchers will find far more links of the small change and confirming type than those of the big boom, disconfirming types.

Of particular relevance, students of organization and management are currently overimpressed with company socialization. Too little attention is being directed to managerial socialization as provided by business schools.[20] In the United States, some of these institutions, like Harvard and MIT, are increasingly creating and transmitting the knowledge and skills on which management practice is based and, by implication, are increasingly influencing the way managerial work is organized and carried out in the country (Schein, 1981). A critical literature has recently begun to accumulate, but what is rarely recognized in this literature is the great variety of managerial education currently available (Schein, 1972). Moreover, especially within the carefully screened, relatively insulated, residential management programs located in the elite universities of the land, contrasting cultures of orientation are being forged which may well carry their members through long organizational and interorganizational careers.

It is hardly surprising that we read in the sacred executive pages of Fortune, The Wall Street Journal, Business Week, and even in the vulgar, popular pages of Time, Harper's, and Esquire of senior officials in private and public organizations who complain loudly that their junior managers appear to them to be more loyal to their respective business school ways (and ties) than they are to the ways of their employing organizations (and, more pointedly perhaps, to them). The two years students spend in graduate school may be the longest and most intensive in situ socialization period they will ever again experience once they set foot on the various corporate escalators of their choice.

To understand how these managers work (and, by implication, how the organizations of which they are a part work), we must study (and study in fine detail) the cultures whence they come. Learning to windsurf, for example, hardly remakes the surfer or skier. If anything, it heightens the relevance of these

identities for novices. Similarly, becoming a police sergeant merely affords another opportunity to fill out and exhibit an already well established slant toward police work. And, newly initiated managers from Harvard or MIT are unlikely to immediately begin dismissing whatever perspectives they may have picked up during their long, arduous, and costly professional education. Corporate socialization in its many disguises will, of course, continue to do its work on people. However, the point I am stressing here is that such socialization may not represent much of an ordeal or dismantling experience for organizational recruits since many of them will find comfortable and altogether confirming positions in industry that will essentially attest to both the appropriateness, good sense, and overriding value of their graduate training.

It is true that mild to bone-cracking culture shocks are not unknown to people as they traverse a given career path. The surfer who finds himself for some odd reason or another suddenly taking windsurfing lessons may soon develop an acute dislike for the helpful hints aimed his way by the cheerful instructor, as well as for the "let's boogie" warmth radiating from his chummy fellow lesson-takers. Street sergeants may also discover that they must spend inordinate amounts of time on the precinct captain's carpet explaining, to their mutual chagrin, why this-or-that form was not properly filled out or why they have not been seen by the captain at their assigned desk since the last full moon. Harvard MBAs may think they're on Mars when they try to establish what they regard as a simple, integrated team approach to the building of a new computer if, deep in the organization, there exist those fiercely independent Pac-Man wizards of high-tech R&D who operate out of half-hidden but highly competitive skunk works, who don't seem to tell each other, much less a manager, any more than they absolutely have to. In all these situations, the culture of orientation is unlikely to get one very far. My suspicion is that because

learning a new culture is anything but easy, withdrawal, retreat, anger, and resignation are the typical responses.

One consequence of potential culture clashes such as these is the adoption by recruits and agents alike of avoidance strategies. One strategy (and, I think, a common one) is to mobilize bias within and across organizations so that newcomers will more often than not resemble the veterans found in a particular locale. This is most clear in police agencies where station-house sergeants represent the numerical norm, outnumbering their street sergeant counterparts by a good margin (Van Maanen, 1983). Even more critical is the fact that as one moves up the police ranks it becomes increasingly unlikely that any officer will be found who holds even remotely to values common among street sergeants. A Pogo-like aphorism is apparent: "We have met the recruits and they are us." Harvard graduates will prefer their own kind, as will MIT grads. Sailors will prefer to windsurf with others who share their competitive tastes.

There is hardly anything new being said here, but what I trust I have provided is some further elaboration on the homogeneity themes prevalent in studies of corporate careers (e.g., Dalton, 1959; Kanter, 1977; Rosenbaum, forthcoming). To generalize a bit, orderly careers of those who move in line with organizational traditions tend to restrict sociability among those so moving in the sense that the like-minded and like-skilled come together over time. Sources of diversity within levels of organizations (and within functions) are driven out, not by the work of clever mindguards or manipulative social control agents, but by the self-selective and reproductive work of cooperating recruits and agents sharing, more or less knowingly and with some pleasure, similar cultures of orientation (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). It would seem that one reason for the apparent absence of managerial innovation in many firms can be traced to the relatively long socialization chains through which high-ranked

officials must pass. The more checkpoints, the less likely much diversity will be found among those who make it through.

Socialization chains for most conventionally-defined professional careers (where checkpoints are relatively infrequent once school is left behind) depend in important ways on graduate training programs where relatively encompassing cultures of orientation are typically discovered by recruits to the profession. For example, where would-be physicians go to medical school plays a major role in their choice of hospital in which they will do their residencies (Bosk, 1979). Preferences for certain kinds of medical practice are influenced to the extent that students who do their residencies in university, research-focused hospitals come to have different career priorities and targets than students who do their residencies in community, patient-focused hospitals (Mumford, 1970). Residency choices reflect preferences developed by student physicians while serving as interns (Light, 1980). And so on. Most full time professional schools operate on the largely unquestioned assumption that the education they offer provides the grounds for competence and cooperation among those "properly trained" within the profession. Herein lies the rub, for "properly trained" is usually code for the skills, values and perspectives on the work emphasized within the culture of any given graduate school (or cluster of schools). As any professional knows, there are always wide variations in practice. What some take as fundamental technique, others dismiss as mystification. What some treat as judgmental or technical error, others treat as mere differences of style.

Cutting closer to the bone, any profession is, in Weber's (1954:181) savvy words, "a form of property on which a holder can collect rent and expand markets." Differences in the cultures of orientation within professions, school-based or not, are, therefore, hardly irrelevant to practitioners. Indeed, these cultures will reflect the rents professionals see fit to charge for their

services, as well as the markets they choose to explore. The image sometimes conjured up, of a professional field in organization studies, is that of relatively independent practitioners operating in an externally determined, free-wheeling environment in which unexpected markets or niches appear and disappear. This image I think significantly distorts the social and proactive processes by which professionals attend to and enforce very different definitions for just who is, and who is not, "properly trained" (Van Maanen & Barley, forthcoming).

To provide some summary and closure on the unabashed culture mongering I've been doing in this paper, a word or two is due on the use and misuse of culture as an analytic concept. On the application of the term, culture is always present when people do something because they think they should; others recognize that what is done is appropriate to the circumstances. If all those involved have roughly the same thing in mind, and act in ways that are more or less consistent with that image, a cultural product results (Becker, 1982). One such product is organization. Obviously, a given culture will not cover everything that people do in or out of an organization. In a firm it is not always clear just who signs what papers, who goes to the meetings in Rio, or who fixes this-or-that machine, just as in the family it is often in doubt as to who takes out the trash, who does the dishes, or who gets the children dressed for school in the morning and out the door.

What culture can and does do in these settings, however, is to help shape the kinds of commitments and obligations people have toward one another, as well as help them define what sort of people they are and what sort they are not. When actions are required, people sharing culture will know what to expect from one another -- even if they have not seen one another before. From this standpoint, culture is a problem solving device and, as I have shown, it is

useful whether one is learning to windsurf, or becoming a police sergeant, or preparing oneself to work as a corporate manager for IBM or Wang.

On the misapplication of the term, culture is not a conventional social science variable in the sense that it can immediately be observed, counted, dimensionalized, yoked to a set of norms, or directly manipulated. It is more or less stored in a person's head and its practical use can only be inferred on the basis of what people use, say, and do. Moreover, it is most apparent to people only when it is not working for them, when standard practices beget unstandard results. The problem facing the practical actor in everyday life, and the cultural analyst alike, is similar to not missing the water until the well runs dry, or not realizing we need air until we are choking. Culture is implicit.

My own attempts to lay culture bare rest simply on looking for contrasts: To look for those cultural collisions that take place within or at the boundaries of organizations. Watching street sergeants deal with their station-house brethren is not only amusing, it is also rewarding in terms of learning about skills, practices, and preferences of sergeants in both camps. To the point of this essay, observing the liminal, betwixt and between position of recruits in the thick of socialization is crucially important in understanding how people take on roles or become something they previously were not. But, such observations, it should be clear, can only be understood insofar as the observer knows something about the cultures being joined or separated by the process. To the extent there is contrast, cultures are opened up. To the extent nothing much happens, culture comes together.

To close on this theme, an anecdote. A very shrewd answer was provided this fall by a student of mine whom I had asked to describe the MIT culture. Without hesitation, she replied, "Oh, that's easy. It's all the things we aren't tested on." Precious little as this may be, it is not a bad answer. In the

context of all the preceding words and examples, we can be sure that whatever this phrase stands for, it will be dragged from school elsewhere, and attempts will probably be made to generalize the MIT culture and it's local variations laterally to situations seen as similar to those encountered at Tech. Perhaps attempts will even be made to generalize vertically, God help us, to life in general. The question researchers must ask, then, is how this culture, represented by "all the things we aren't tested on," aids or hinders our intrepid adventurer in any or all of the organizations she moves into after leaving MIT. Ultimately, this is an empirical question to which an answer must not be assumed.

NOTES

1. This paper has been percolating for some time. I have talked through the material in a speech "Socialization and Innovation" given at MIT for the Industrial Liaison Program Symposium on 'Organization Studies and Human Resource Management' on December 15, 1981; in a public talk on the barefaced topic of "Making it in Management" sponsored by the Women in Management group at Cornell University on April 6, 1982; and as a speaker on "Chains of Socialization" at the Educational Career Planning Organization's eastern meetings in New York on October 16, 1982. Those who have helped me through various forms and versions of this paper are many. Especially guilty of giving aid, comfort, and material from which I have unblushingly drawn include Diane Argyris, Lotte Bailyn, Steve Barley, Jim Bess, Nancy Dallaire, Debora Dougherty, Debbie Kolb, Gideon Kunda, Jeanne Lindholm, Marc Miller, Peter Manning, Jeff Pfeffer, Ed Schein, Diana Smith, and Karl Weick. Partial support for the writing was provided by: Chief of Naval Research, Psychological Sciences Division (code 452), Organizational Effectiveness Research Programs, Office of Naval Research, Arlington, Virginia, 22217, under Contract Number N00014-80-C-0905; NR 170-911.

2. Invoking an environmental characteristic as an explanatory variable for some structural feature of an organization is, of course, a very risky business. I do so here only because I wish to draw attention to the fact that socialization requires organizational resources of both a human and financial kind. To organize and offer heavy-handed socialization of a transformational type requires investments which few firms operating in highly competitive marketplaces (especially small ones with precious little slack) are likely to make. The strategy such firms seem to follow involves buying the services of those presumed to be already socialized effectively and then swiftly testing this presumption by seeing if the talents so purchased can be put to useful work. Much turnover may be the mark of many firms following such a strategy and considered by them merely a cost of doing business in a given industry (Staw, 1980). That this is viewed by owners and managers alike as less costly than promoting loyalty and developing corporate specific skill early on through intensive but expensive socialization is the point of the example in the text. The resource dependency perspective on organization design (Aldrich and Pfeffer, 1976; Pfeffer, 1982:190-204) as well as Ouchi's (1980) very clever rendition of markets, bureaucracies, and clans provide theoretical guides to the claims of my paper.

3. Such lack of interest stems from the faith we apparently place in the unshakeable nature of what we call our personalities. Thus, even when dramatic shifts of attitude and behavior occur among adults, both the folk and sometimes academic views seem to be that such shifts merely reveal what such people were all along. This is hardly the place to quibble about what is deep and permanent within a person and what is not. But, what I do want to point out are the awesome people-shaping powers we unhesitatingly grant to early childhood and adolescent experiences. Theories, if not always the research on which they are based, affirm the conventional wisdom. For example, developmental theories of the career would have us believe that a person's occupational preferences, if not talents, are all but determined

by the time one exits high school or, at the latest, college (e.g., Super, 1957; Sonnenfeld and Kotter, 1982). Sociological career theories also embrace a similar conclusion and point to the apparent connection of class, gender, region, schooling, cohort, and even the accident of birth order on both the seeking and finding of careers, as well as on the success or failure within them (e.g., Slocum, 1966; Moore, 1969). Brim's (1966) views on how childhood socialization plays itself out in adult life are most appealing to me, but I am also too much of a Goffman disciple to dismiss entirely the cognitive and social importance of the sort of self-bending we do throughout our careers as a result of a situation specific socialization (Goffman, 1959; 1961).

4. This is not a very startling proposition. Cognitive and cultural anthropologists have been using it for years, although Stefflre (1972) has been perhaps the most bold and explicit. In psychology, the proposition is everywhere and elegantly handled by Miller, Galanter, and Pribram (1960). In sociology, Goffman's (1974) frame theory, Cicourel's (1974) cognitive sociology, and Garfinkel's (1967) initial formulation of ethnomethodology make my simpleminded proposition appear primitive at best and banal at worst. My excuse for reformulating it here is merely that it has helped me think about organizational socialization in a fashion I think useful. We have perhaps another example then of doing new things in old ways; an example restricted to the chain of socialization which is, in this case, my own.

5. Drawing out such analogies rests, of course, on the careful description of at least two socialization settings, and then noting the parallels and contrasts between them. As suggested in the text, most socialization studies focus intensively on only one context. For example, we may know a good deal about recruit socialization in particular schools or in particular organizations, but rarely do we know much about the relationship (or lack thereof) of one to the other as mediated by recruits in each. An important exception to this general rule is Willis's (1977) provocative analysis of how working class kids get working class jobs.

6. Those of us who are the culture vultures of organization studies are a fairly contentious lot and do not frequently adopt one another's definitions. We should not be surprised. Anthropologists who are thought to "own" the concept also disagree, and disagree spectacularly, as to what culture means and how it works (e.g., Kroeber and Kluckholm, 1952; Sanday, 1979). As displayed in the text, I lean toward the symbolic ("shared") and cognitive ("understandings") in my use of the term. A good discussion and critique of the many uses of culture in organization studies is provided by Allaire and Firsirotu (1982).

7. Materials in this section are based on a variety of sources. Parts of the section can be read as a self-report from an agent-informant. Personal knowledge underlies much of what I say here, but personal knowledge is, alas, not always correct. At any rate, my knowledge of MIT is intimate, first-hand, and informed by my more or less responsible participation in the affairs of the school since 1972. My knowledge of Harvard is, at best, proximate and based largely on informant reports (students and ex-students; faculty and ex-faculty), loose and sporadic observational forays (always

for other purposes), and the published self-reports of the school (e.g., Annual Reports, The Harbus Review), its faculty (e.g., Roethlisberger, 1977) and its students (e.g., Cohen, 1973). The best source on the B-School I have stumbled across is, however, a little known work by Orth (1963) wherein the inner workings of two first-year sections are closely detailed. This is a lovely piece of work that deserves far more attention than it has received, particularly in light of just how relevant Orth's observations are today. Finally, I should note that I have titled this section "Golden Passports" because, at both schools, starting salaries for the newly-minted graduate of the Class of '82 averaged around $36,000 per year.

8. The theoretical assumptions running beneath my choices of what to look at and describe at Harvard and MIT have been advanced and used by many students of educational organization and process (e.g., Becker, et al., 1961, 1968; Wallace, 1966; Olesen and Whittaker, 1968; Schein, 1972; Light, 1980). Essentially, these writers argue that schools organize student learning tasks differently and, hence, offer different experiences for their students. If experiences vary, so too should the norms and values adhered to by students across schools. The question researchers have then asked is what tasks and what experiences matter most? A marvelous comparative study that asks just these questions is White's (1977) close look at the ways Northwestern University and the University of Chicago organize their MBA programs and what differences are to be found among students as a result. I have, in fact, used White's study as a model here and have drawn on some of his conceptual categories for sorting out my own data. The similarity of contrasts between Harvard and MIT and between Northwestern and Chicago respectively are striking. I do not think this artifactual either for I suspect the same contrasts would appear between the business programs in such hypothetical pairings as Stanford and UC Berkeley, Columbia and Wharton, and Dartmouth and Cornell. Nor do I think students always (or even frequently) enter any given program with great knowledge and forethought about what the program looks like sociologically. Self-selection may explain some of the results but not all. Indeed, on virtually all demographic dimensions the only real difference I can detect between the students in the two schools of my interest is that some go to Harvard and others go to MIT.

9. Some would no doubt argue that the most distinctive feature of a Harvard classroom is one I ignore here, the case method (and the slightly cynical "casemanship" norms that arise among students in response to the case method). I do not wish, however, to enter into pedagogic debate as to what the case method can and cannot do for (or to) students who are exposed to it. Suffice it to say the case method per se does not distinguish Harvard as much as does its mere ubiquitousness (at Harvard, about 10 to 15 cases per week during the first year). MIT students talk and write cases but cases are not so much a part of their daily diet as they are at Harvard. Even so, I am reluctant to also argue that just because Harvard students are continually asked to answer the classic case query, "what would you do if you were Mr. So-and-So," they are any more likely to react to their respective institution so differently than MIT students who are continually asked to solve, model, or predict problems within a business context. Nor is there anything about cases that requires the batch processing of

students at Harvard or anything about models that requires the unit processing of students at MIT. From my perspective, I think one could easily switch the curricula of the two schools and, if everything else remained in place, the results I report here would still stand. It is not the case but the culture in which the case is worked that matters.

10. Instructors must look up to students in more ways than one. Performance in the B-School pits are closely monitored by the school and professional classroom competence is, in many ways, judged by whatever student ratings a faculty member can manage to obtain. Core courses are the mainstay of the school and are put together by faculty committees who decide what cases to use, how to use them, and where in the class syllabus they properly fit. There is some discretion for the teacher at the core, but not much. Cases also come, for the faculty, complete with teaching notes suggesting to instructors just how a particular case might properly be presented. Teaching seminars for new faculty, incentives for course development, relatively generous support for case research and writing, an extensive audio-visual library of teaching materials all denote the importance placed on teaching at Harvard. If life in the pit is a source of student anxiety, consider what it is for the faculty who must occupy it -- particularly for those who are untenured. See Hall and Bazerman (1982) for a slightly more generous (and laudatory) treatment of the way Harvard generates "good" teaching.

11. The closest analogy at Harvard to the MIT Master's thesis is the research paper students must write in their second year. In character, however, the Harvard students' research paper is invariably a group project for which a group grade results. The declaration of a major (concentration) at MIT is not something the school places on a student's degree but it is something the school offers and students accept. Moreover, most students conspicuously note their concentrations on their resumes since they are convinced that it will help get their managerial careers off to a good start. Harvard students may also concentrate -- and many, if not most, do -- but they would be unlikely to admit to having done so on something so public as their resumes. In contrast to MIT, Harvard students believe a declared major can only harm, not help their job hunts. By and large, these belief systems are self-fulfilling.

12. Cases in point are the legendary and infamous WACs, "Written Analysis of Cases," due roughly every other week for first-year B-school students. Although discussion is permitted among students, WACs are intended by the faculty to be individual assignments. While some students argue that discussions on these cases among section mates or among study group members are usually cautious and guarded ("you don't give away your best ideas"), other students argue that they would never hold back since past obligations may be due and the fear of the future is too great ("who knows when you'll be coming up short of ideas yourself"). All agree, however, that WACs are superb devices for focusing one's attention. That everybody's attention is focused on the same thing at the same time is but another instance of the common and collective theme at Harvard.

13. This is not to say that everyone is equally well integrated within the culture. Certainly subcultures of varying size and composition exist

within the school and within sections (e.g., carpoolers, married students living off-campus, "genericists" with overarching perspectives on business problems independent of industry or firm, such as would-be consultants or investment bankers, "floor polishers" with industry and firm-specific views who actually enjoy the so-called soft, bullshit courses emphasizing the behavioral aspects of management, students who share similar recreational predilections such as skiing, partying, or drug use, etc). Even small countercultures are visible (e.g., leftists, environmentalists, women's rights advocates, libertarians, etc.). Deviance from the general pattern is not widespread, but the mere presence of such recognizable groups suggests that at least some students adopt alternative lines of thought and action during the years of their business school education and, more importantly, have found some social support for doing so. Perhaps more problematic (to students and faculty alike) are those social isolates who, for a variety of reasons, do not seem to find any grounds at all for mutual association with fellow students. Orth (1963) evocatively points to the problems of social isolation at Harvard and notes that such students are more than three times as likely as their peers to be in serious academic trouble.

14. To consider shame and guilt as controlling sentiments at Harvard and MIT raises far more questions than can be answered in this paper. Suffice it to say, shame is more likely to be a social control device when groups are relatively isolated, fixed, long-term, valued, and institutionalized such that there are public rituals, totems, supporting insignia, heraldic imagery, inside-outside lineaments, and so forth. Guilt is more likely when social organization is highly differentiated by abilities, marked by temporary associations, and where there exist multiple sources of status, loyalty, purpose, and affection. Meanings attached to public events in differentiated systems are less condensed, redundant, and ritualized (Bernstein et al., 1971). In this sense, matters such as success (or failure) are communalized at Harvard, individualized at MIT; a matter attesting to the worthy (or unworthy) character of the section at Harvard, and of the worthy (or unworthy) character of the person at MIT.

15. I must qualify things a bit here since all I mean to imply is that Harvard students are more organized than their counterparts at MIT, and hence have more potential power. Such power is not necessarily put into practice, although the ways it can be used are many: through student representatives on faculty and administrative committees (Harvard has a significant edge over MIT in this official power category by virtue of its greater number of representatives in proportion to the faculty); through the class and instructor rating systems (while also present at MIT, these ratings have less bite since faculty careers are based far more on research productivity than teaching performance); through calculated section-wide classroom behavior designed to shame, embarrass, or even humiliate a given instructor (possible at MIT but less likely because of the weaker student ties in any given class); through rare (but nonetheless frequent enough to be commented upon by students and faculty alike) first-year revolts designed to redress section or class-wide grievances (virtually unheard of at MIT). More generally, neither the B-school nor the Sloan School are noted for their restive student bodies or the great issues these student bodies infrequently choose to challenge (e.g., food quality, class scheduling,

unpopular instructors, specific class requirements, etc.). Nor do highly visible, outspoken student leaders frequently emerge in either setting. (There is, from the student's perspective, too much at risk -- the golden passport — for one to joust with the faculty or administration). From the faculty point of view, both institutions have their share of "attitude problems" but such problems tend more often than not to simply go away without great fuss or collective commotion.

16. These remarks are based on archival (placement office) materials collected at both institutions. The category systems are identical. The career choices reflected by the data are not merely artifactual since the firms recruiting at both MIT and Harvard are numerous and, with few exceptions, overlapping. On average, students in both institutions report receiving three to four serious offers on graduation. The number of job interviews is, of course, much higher; often higher by a factor of ten. To see students in their "interview suits" during the second year is a common and everyday event from late fall until March or April. By early spring, however, the wearing of the interview suit becomes a minor stigma signifying that the wearer may not yet have a suitable job. Needless to say, formal analysis of these data await another analyst with proper motive, resources, and roots in the land of Chi-squaredom.

17. Materials in this section are derived from my own participant-observation studies of the police. The work began in 1969 and continues to draw me to the field today. I have discussed my mostly ethnographic methods at some length elsewhere (Van Maanen, 1978, 1979) and will not trouble the reader with the details here. Much of the sergeant data appears in more elaborate form in Van Maanen (1983). Comments regarding the structure of police agencies and the official role of sergeants within them are relatively well established but a suspicious reader who wants to check my assertions might sample from the works of Bordua and Reiss, 1967; Wilson, 1963; Westley, 1970; Bittner, 1970; Rubinstein, 1973; Manning, 1977; Muir, 1977; and Black, 1980.

18. I am certainly not the first to remark on the hostlilities exhibited between members of these two cultures of policing. In fact, the Ianni's (1983) have a book on the subject. Closer to the level of detail I find most attractive, however, is the observational work of British sociologist Michael Chatterton (1975; 1979). This work is extremely good and, as one might expect to be lurking behind my compliment, is mostly consistent with the observations I have made of sergeants in the United States. Punch (1979) also provides collaborative evidence on some of the matters discussed in the text based on his studies of the police in Amsterdam. Perhaps the most trenchant descriptions of street-level patrol work (called "the occupational culture of policing") are found in Manning (1977). The organizational culture(s) of policing of which, presumably, station-house sergeants are a part have been less well described although some feel for the agency-specific, managerial worlds of police officials can be located in Wilson, 1968; Gardiner, 1969; Tifft, 1975; and Manning, 1980.

19. Materials in this section come from my own rare and awkward attempts at participation, some very informal observational ventures into the field, and, as always, lengthy interviews with informants. The key informant here

is Marc Miller who, conveniently, is a friend, a cognitive anthropologist, and sometimes co-conspirator in research of mutual interest. He has also written down many of his musings on windsurfing. These are writings from which I have borrowed shamelessly. See, in particular, Miller and Hutchins (1982).

20. There are, of course, exceptions to this general rule, but such exceptions are typically in the domain of attitude change studies conducted at a single institution (e.g., Schein 1967, 1968; Schein and Ott, 1962; Vroom and Deci, 1971; and Feldman 1976, 1981). Very little comparative work has been done with management students in different settings, although, like this paper, there is much speculation that the differences are quite likely to be unmistakable. Such studies are needed.

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